XVI
RECOLLECTION OF THE BUDDHA, *DHAMMA* AND *SANGHA*

CONTENTS

1. Recollection of the Buddha (*Buddhanussati*)

The recollection inspired by the Enlightened One is *Buddhanussati*. It is the term for mindfulness with the Buddha's Virtues as objects. It is the first of the Four Guardian Meditations**,** the other three being:

i) Development of **Loving Kindness** to dispel ill-will,
ii) **Loathsomeness of the Body** to dispel lust,
iii) **Mindfulness of Death** to dispel complacency and arouse religious urgency (*samvega*).

How to recollect the Buddha's virtues?

One begins the recollection by verbal recitation to familiarise with the objects. As concentration becomes better, one switches from verbal to mental recitation. When the concentration further deepens, the mind will settle on the virtues recollected instead of the words. So one should know the full meaning of the Virtues to reap the benefits i.e. *Buddhanussati* should be practised with faith and understanding. The traditional recitation of the Nine Virtues of the Buddha is:

"*Iti pi so Bhagava*, [1]*Araham,* [2]*Sammasambuddho,* [3]*Vijja carana* sampanno, [4]*Sugato,* [5]*Lokavidu,* [6]*Anuttaro purisadamma sarathi,* [7]*Sattha deva-manussanam*, [8]*Buddho*, [9]*Bhagava ti*."

"By this (reason), He, the Exalted One is [1]Worthy, [2]Supremely Enlightened, [3]Endowed with Knowledge and Conduct, [4]Well-gone, [5]Knower of worlds, [6]Incomparable charioteer of men to be tamed, [7]Teacher of gods and men, [8]Enlightened and [9]Exalted".

These **nine virtues** are now explained in detail.

1.1. Worthy or Accomplished (*Araham*)

The Exalted One is Worthy or Accomplished for the following reasons:

i) ***Araka*** **=** Far or Remote -- Far from all vices having completely expunged all traces of defilements by means of the Noble Path.

ii) ***Ari-hata*** = Enemies destroyed -- The enemies or defilements are destroyed by the Noble Eightfold Path.

iii) ***Ara-hata*** = Spokes destroyed -- This Wheel of *Samsara* (Rounds of Rebirth) whose **Hub** is made of ignorance and craving for existence, whose **Spokes** are *kamma* formations (*sankhara*) and the rest, whose **Rim** is ageing and death, has been revolving throughout time that has no beginning. By the penetration of this **Dependent Origination** in all aspects through **Omniscience**, the Buddha has cut off the spokes and destroyed the wheel.

iv) ***Arahati*** **=** Worthy of the requisites and the distinction of being accorded homage by gods and men because it is He who is most worthy of offerings.

v) ***A-raha-bhava*** **=** No secrecy -- Fools in the world flaunt their cleverness, yet do evil in secret and conceal them for fear of getting a bad name. The Perfect One has no such secret evildoing *(raha-bhava)*.

He is **accomplished** *(araham*) because He is **far** (*araka*) from defilements having **destroyed these enemies** (*ari-hata***)** and **cut off the spokes** (*ara-hata*) of the Wheel. He becomes most **worthy** (*arahati)* of offerings and has **no secrecy** (*a-raha*) of evil doing.

1.2. Supremely Enlightened (*Samma-sambuddho*)

Bodhi or Enlightenment is the Fourfold Insight Knowledge of the Path or the complete penetration of the Four Noble Truths. There are 3 kinds of enlightened beings called Buddhas.

i) ***Savaka*** or Disciple Buddha is one who attains Enlightenment with the help of a teacher. Such a person is also called an ***Arahant.***

ii) ***Pacceka*** or Private Buddha is one who attains **Enlightenment by himself** but does not reveal or preach it to the masses. Before becoming a *Pacceka* Buddha, the aspirant must fulfill the Ten Perfections for duration of 2 incalculable periods and 100,000 world cycles.

iii) ***Sammasambuddha*** or Supreme Buddha is one who attains Enlightenment with **Omniscience** and **Great Compassion** by himself i.e. discovered (*buddha*) all things rightly (*samma*) by himself (*samam*). Before attaining Supreme Enlightenment, the aspirant or *Bodhisatta* must fulfill the Ten Perfections for at least four incalculables (*asankheyya*) and 100,000 world cycles. The appearance of a Supreme Buddha is a very rare event!

(a) <u>Special Qualities of the Supreme Buddha</u>

A Supreme Buddha possesses 6 kinds of knowledge not shared by others. These Incomparable Qualities are:

i) *Asaya-anusaya Nana*: Knowledge of the **inclinations** and **latent/inherent tendencies** of all beings.

ii) *Indriya-paropariyatti Nana*: Knowledge of the mental faculties and their state of maturity in all beings.

iii) *Sabbannuta Nana*: Knowledge of **Omniscience** and Omnipotence.

iv) *Anavarana Nana*: Knowledge of penetrative clarity without obstruction i.e. **unrestricted** access to any objective field.
v) *Yamaka Patihariya Nana*: Knowledge of the **Twin Miracle.**
vi) *Maha Karuna Samapatti Nana*: Knowledge of the attainment of **Great Compassion** by which He looks at the world

(b) <u>The Five Eyes of the Buddha</u>

Another way to describe the Buddha's mental powers is to classify them under Five Eyes:

i) Buddha Eye: Incomparable qualities (a) and (b).
ii) *Dhamma* Eye: The Path Knowledges.
iii) *Samanta* or All-seeing Eye: Incomparable qualities (c) and (d).
iv) *Panna* or Wisdom Eye: Knowledge of the destruction of all defilements, also called *Asavakkhaya Nana.*
v) *Dibbacakkhu* Eye: Divine Eye by which He sees all the worlds.

(c) <u>What is Omniscient Knowledge?</u>

This is knowledge of the five *Neyya Dhammas* (*Neyya* = all that should be known) namely:

i) *Sankhara*: All conditioned things, mental and material.
ii) *Vikara*: Alteration or the arising and passing away of all mental and material phenomena.
iii) *Lakkhana*: General and specific characteristics of all mental and material phenomena.
iv) *Pannati*: All concepts, names and terms.
v) *Nibbana*: The extinction of craving, the Unconditioned.

With the power of **Omniscience**, a Buddha possesses 3 supreme qualities whereby He can enlighten others, namely:

- Knowledge of all truths.
- Knowledge of all teaching methods.
- The particular teaching method to suit the inclination and maturity of the disciple.

(d) Why the Buddha is called "Possessor of the Ten Powers"
In the "Greater Discourse on the Lion's Roar" (*Majjhima Nikaya Sutta* No. 12), the Buddha described the Ten Powers as follows:

i) Knowledge of what is **possible** and what is **not possible** e.g. possible for a man to become a Buddha but not possible for a woman. This knowledge arises from a complete understanding of the operation of the Five Universal Laws.
ii) Knowledge of past, present and future **fruition** of deeds, their **causes and conditions.**
iii) Knowledge of the practices leading to various destinations or **ways of rebirth**.
iv) Knowledge of the **world** as it really is, with its many and different elements e.g. four primary elements, eighteen elements of object, sense door and consciousness.
v) Knowledge of **inclinations and tendencies** (characters) of all beings i.e. beings are of inferior/superior inclinations and they gravitate towards those of similar inclinations.
vi) Knowledge of the state of **faculties** of beings i.e. degree of maturity of the five faculties of faith, wisdom, energy, concentration and mindfulness.
vii) Knowledge of the **defilements**, the **purification**, and **emergence** with regard to the attainments of meditation.
viii) Knowledge of the **remembrance of past lives** without limit.
ix) Knowledge of the **decease and rebirth** of beings.
x) Knowledge of the **destruction of the defilements** (*Asavakkhaya Nana*).

1.3. Endowed with Knowledge and Conduct
(*Vijjacarana Sampanno*)

(a) *Vijja*: Direct Knowledge
Bhayabherava Sutta of *the Majjhima Nikaya* describes three kinds of direct knowledge (Nos.1-3) while *Ambattha Sutta* of the *Digha Nikaya* adds five more to make eight kinds of direct knowledge.

i) Knowledge of the **remembrance of past lives** (*Pubbenivasanussati*).
ii) Knowledge of decease and rebirth of beings or the **Divine Eye** (*Dibbacakkhu).*
iii) Knowledge of the **extinction of cankers** (*Asavakkhaya*)
iv) **Insight knowledge** (*Vipassana*).
v) Knowledge of **psychic powers** (*Iddhivada*)
vi) **Divine ear** *(Dibbasota*).
vii) Knowledge of **reading the minds** of others (*Cetopariya*).
viii) Knowledge to **create replicas** of oneself (*Manomaya Iddhi).*

(b) <u>*Carana*: Virtuous Conduct (consists of 15 factors)</u>

First seven are called *saddhammas* (good states), possessed by all *Ariyas* or Noble Persons)

i) **Faith** in *Kamma,* Triple Gem, etc. (*Saddha*)
ii) **Mindfulness** in performing meritorious actions (*Sati*).
iii) **Shame** of doing evil (*Hiri*)
iv) **Dread** of doing evil (*Ottappa*)
v) **Effort** in abandoning unwholesome states and developing wholesome states *(Viriya*)
vi) Broad religious **knowledge** (*Bahussuta*)
vii) Understanding of the **Four Noble Truths** (*Panna*)
viii) Moderation in **eating** (*Bhojanga-mattannu*)
ix) Devotion to **wakefulness** (*Jagariyanuyoga*)
x) Guarding the doors of the **sense faculties** (*Indriya-samvara*)
xi) Restraint by **virtue** (*Sila-samvara*)
xii) First *Jhana* concentration
xiii) Second *Jhana* concentration
xiv) Third *Jhana* concentration
xv) Fourth *Jhana* concentration

The possession of **Direct Knowledge** shows the greatness of His **Omniscience** while the possession of **Conduct** shows the greatness of His **Compassion**. Through Omniscience, He knows what is beneficial or harmful to all beings. Through Compassion, He warns them of harm and exhorts them to good.

1.4. Well-Gone or Sublime One (*Sugato*)

He is called the Sublime One or **Well-Gone** (***sugata***) because of the following reasons.

(a) ***Sobhana Gamana*** **= Good Manner of Going**: He has gone without attachment in the direction of safety, by means of the Noble Eightfold Path.

(b) ***Sundara Gata*** **= Gone to Excellent Place,** Deathless *Nibbana.*

(c) ***Samma Gata*** **= Gone Rightly**: He has gone rightly without going back to the defilements abandoned at each Path, or He has gone rightly from the time of making His resolution up till the Enlightenment through fulfillment of the ten perfections and following the right path, the Noble Eightfold Path without deviating towards the two extremes: indulgence in sense pleasures or self-mortification.

(d) ***Samma Gadatta*** = **Speaking Rightly**: Of the six kinds of speech given below, He avoids the four types of speech unconnected with good, namely i, ii, iii, iv. Such speech as v, the Buddha speaks at the proper time. Such speech as vi, the Buddha knows the time to expound. The Six Kinds of Speeches are:

i) Untrue, unconnected with good, not pleasing to others. (Lies causing harm to others)
ii) Untrue, unconnected with good, pleasing to others. (Flattery)
iii) True, unconnected with good, not pleasing to others. (Bad worldly news)
iv) True, unconnected with good, pleasing to others. (Good worldly news)
v) True, **connected with good**, not pleasing to others. (Reprimanding wrong doing)
vi) True, **connected with good**, Pleasing to others. (Teaching the *Dhamma* and *Vinaya*)

He is the **Well-gone One** (*sugato*) because of His good manner of going (*sobhana gamana*), having gone to an excellent place (*sundara gata*) and gone rightly (*samma gata*). He speaks rightly (*samma gadatta*), using only the right speech at the right time.

1.5. Knower of Worlds (*Lokavidu*)

He is Knower of Worlds because He has known them in all ways. There are three worlds, namely: World of the **Conditioned/ Formations** *(Sankhara-loka*), World of **Beings** *(Satta-loka*) and World of **Locations** *(Okasa-loka)*

(a) *Sankhara Loka*

The Pali word *"sankhara"* has two meaning. As one of the Five Aggregates, it means "volitional activities or efforts." Here it means formations or conditioned things i.e. things formed from conditions or resultants i.e. mental & material phenomena. The Buddha knows their causes & conditions, their formation & dissolution, etc.

- **Materiality:** constituents of matter & properties, four great elements & derived materiality, producers of material phenomena, etc.
- **Mentality:** Six types of consciousness conditioned by the sensory organs and contact with the sense objects. Because of contact, feelings arise thereby conditioning other mental and material phenomena.

"Within this fathom long body lie the world (formations), the arising, cessation, and the way leading to the cessation of the world." **Thus He is the knower of the world.**

(b) *Satta Loka*

The world of beings or all living creatures is what is meant here. He knows the beings in the 31 planes of existence, their habits, tendencies, whether of keen or dull faculties.

- *Apaya*/Woeful states: Hell, Ghost, Demon, Animal (4)
- Human realm (1)
- *Deva* realm: 4 Great Kings, *Tavatimsa, Yama, Tusita, Nimmarati, Paranimitta* `` (6)

- 1st *Jhana* Plane: *Maha Brahma*, Minister, Retinue (3)
- 2nd *Jhana* Plane: *Abhassara* or Gods of Radiance (3)
- 3rd *Jhana* Plane: *Subhakinha* or Gods of Lustre (3)
- 4th *Jhana* Plane: *Vehapphala* or Gods of Great Reward (1)
- *Asannasatta* or Unconscious beings (1)
- Pure Abodes where *Anagamins* are reborn (5)
- *Arupa* Plane: Four formless or mental realms (4)

Total Planes of Existence = 31

(c) *Okasa Loka*

The space-time continuum is what is meant here.

- The single complete universe consisting of the great earth, the oceans, mountains and continents, the various hells below the earth's surface, the six abodes of *devas* and twenty abodes of *Brahmas* in vertical position, the sun, moon and planets.

There are also **three other kinds of world systems**, namely:

- Ten-thousand-world-system which is called the realm of existence in which Buddhas appear and all *devas* and *Brahmas* therein form the audience of the Buddhas.

- Great-thousand-world-system which is called the realm of influence where the influence of the *parittas* and the Buddhas pervade and all *devas* and *Brahmas* therein accept it.

- Infinite-world-system which is called the realm of object and it means the one which serves as the objective field of knowledge of the Buddhas.

His knowledge of the three worlds is complete. So He is called Knower of Worlds.

1.6. Incomparable Charioteer of Men to be Tamed (*Annutaro Purisadamma Sarathi*)

(a) ***Annutaro*****:** He is **incomparable** because there is no one who can compare with Him in virtue, concentration, deliverance, and knowledge and vision of deliverance. In the *Ariyapariyesana Sutta*, the Buddha declared that He is without peer.

(b) ***Sarathi:*** **Charioteer**, trainer or breaker-in of human steer.

(c) ***Purisadamma:*** **Men to be tamed**, figuratively, the untrained mind (capable of committing the five heinous crimes), namely:

- Animal males such as the *naga* Aravala, the elephant Dhanapalaka and others.
- Human males such as the brahman student Ambattha, the Jain's son Saccaka.
- Non-human males such as the *yakkhas* Suciloma and Alavaka, Sakka Devaraja.

The Blessed One tamed and disciplined them by various disciplinary means as described: *"I discipline men to be tamed sometimes gently and I discipline them sometimes roughly. I also discipline them sometimes gently and roughly."* He can guide men so well that in a single session, they may go in **eight directions** (Four Paths & Four Fruitions) without hesitation. Thus He is called **Incomparable Charioteer of men to be tamed.**

1.7. Teacher of Gods and Men (*Sattha Devamanussanam*)

(a) ***Sattha*****= Teacher**: People who want to progress require a teacher or leader to guide them to their goal. The Buddha taught the perfect way to self-development via the **Noble Eightfold Path** leading to the cessation of suffering. He is like the caravan leader who brings the caravan across the **dangerous wilderness (*****Samsara*****)** to a land of **safety (*****Nibbana*****).**

(b) ***Deva-Manusssanam* = Gods and men**: This term denotes those who are the **best** and also those who are **capable of progress** such as the Chief Disciples, the Venerable Sariputta and Moggallana, the great *Arahants,* innumerable *devas* and *Brahmas.* Even an animal, through listening to the Buddha's Teaching, acquired rebirth as a *deva* and attained Path & Fruition Knowledge after the Buddha taught him the Dhamma, as in the case of Manduka, the frog deity of Campa.

He bestows the blessings of the *Dhamma* on all of the gods, men and animals who are capable of progress. Thus He is the **Teacher of gods and men.**

1.8. Enlightened (*Buddho*)

According to *Niddesa* i. 143 and *Patisambhidamagga* i. 174, a "Buddha" is one who discovers the Four Noble Truths by himself and reaches omniscience therein and mastery of the powers. The derivation of the word and meanings are given below.

(a) ***Bujjhita* = Discoverer** of the Truths, thus he is enlightened ***(buddha***).

(b) ***Bodheta* = Enlightener** of the generation, thus he is enlightened (***buddha).***

(c) ***Buddhi* = Discovery** capable of discovering all ideas, which is omniscience, thus he is enlightened (***buddha***).

"Buddha" is not a name given by parents, friends, relatives, monks, brahmans or devas. "Buddha", signifies **final liberation**, a realistic description of Enlightened Ones together with their obtainment of **omniscience** under the enlightenment (***bodhi)*** tree.

Thus when two Brahmins (Dona and Sela), who were struck by His radiance and glory asked whether He was a *deva, gandhabba* or *yakkha,* the Buddha replied as follows:

"*As a lotus, fair and lovely, by the water is not soiled,*
By the world I am not soiled. Therefore, brahmin, I am the Buddha."
(*Anguttara*, Book of Fours, Chapter 37)

"*Known are the things to be known, cultivated are the things to be cultivated, destroyed are the things to be destroyed. Therefore, brahmin, I am the Buddha.*" (*Sutta Nipata*, III.7, Sela)

1.9. Exalted or Blessed One (*Bhagava*)

Bhagavant is a term signifying the respect and veneration accorded to Him as the highest of all beings distinguished by His special qualities (refer to earlier meaning of *Anuttaro*). The derivation of the word and meanings are given below.

(a) ***Bhagehi*= Blessings:** He is called "**Blessed (*bhagava*)**" because He is associated with six blessings, namely: lordship, *dhamma*, fame, glory, wish and endeavour.

i) **Lordship** over His mind such as making the body minute, light, gigantic, arriving where he wants to go, producing what he wants, self-mastery, supernormal powers, immediate accomplishment at his wish when performing a task.

ii) ***Dhamma***, which are the nine Supra-mundane States, consisting of the eight Path & Fruition Knowledges and Nibbana.

iii) **Fame** *(yasa*): The Buddha's exceedingly pure fame has spread to the three worlds by the power of His Truthfulness.

iv) **Glory** *(siri*): He possesses the splendour of body, perfect in every respect, comforting those who behold His presence.

v) **Wish:** He succeeded in every wish He entertained e.g. the resolution at the feet of Dipankara Buddha, fulfillment of the Ten Perfections, attainment of Enlightenment.

vi) **Endeavour:** He possesses the **Right Effort**, which is the reason why the whole world venerates Him. His effort is described by His own words: *"Let the skin remain, let the sinews remain, let the bones remain, let the flesh and blood dry up. I shall not rest nor relax until I attain what I set out to do."*

(b) ***Bhaggava*** = **Abolishment:** He has abolished all kinds of defilements, stains and cankers, all kinds of misconduct, craving, wrong views, the five kinds of Maras*, etc. *(Maras of defilements, of the aggregates, of kamma-formations, Mara the deity, and Mara as death.)

(c) ***Bhagyava*** = **Fortunate** owing to the "fortunateness" to have reached the further shore of the ocean of perfection of the ten paramis, which produce mundane and supra-mundane bliss. His possession of fortunateness is shown in the following ways:

i) Excellence of **His physical body**, which bears all the marks of His merits.
ii) Excellence of **His *Dhamma*-body**, namely the nine supra-mundane states and all His Teachings over 45 years.
iii) **Esteem** by worldly people and those who resemble Him (*ariyas*)
iv) **Fit to be relied upon** by laymen, *bhikkhus* and *devas* because He always gives the best advice leading to mundane and supra-mundane bliss.

(d) ***Bhattava*** = **One who has frequented**, cultivated, developed such mundane and supramundane states such as the divine abidings, solitude, jhanas, and Nibbana as the void, the desireless and the signless, liberations and others as well.

(e) ***Bha-Ga-Va*:** This term is derived by combining the syllables "*Bha* from *bhava*", "*Ga* from *gamana*" and "*Va* from *vanta*" and denotes "one who has rejected (*vanta*) going to (*gamana*) the kinds of becoming (*bhava*)".

Thus He is the **Blessed One** (*bhagava*) because of His possession of **blessings** (*bhagehi*), **abolishment** (*bhaggava*), **fortunateness** (*bhagyava*) and because He has **frequented (*bhattava*)** and **rejected going into the kinds of becoming** (*bha-ga-va*).

1.10. Benefits of *Buddhanussati*

When recollected with **faith and understanding**, Buddha's Virtues become the objects which condition the arising of wholesome mental states thereby preventing unwholesome states from arising. Through frequent and devoted meditation, one derives the following benefits:

i) Acquires **abundant faith,** which purifies the mind so that **mindfulness** and **concentration** is easily established.

ii) Productive of **joy** which is helpful in difficult times e.g. sickness, loss or facing hardships.

iii) Instills **confidence** in oneself thereby dispelling fear, anxiety, doubt and restlessness.

Owing to the profundity of Buddha's Virtues and the pre-occupation involved in recollecting the various kinds of virtue, the meditator does not attain to fixed concentration (*jhana*) but reaches only access concentration, which is sufficient to serve as a foundation for insight meditation practice. By virtue of this practice (*Buddhanussati* followed by *Vipassana* meditation), the meditator is assured of a happy destiny, should he/she fail to realize the **Path and Fruition** Knowledge in this very life.

2. Recollection of the *Dhamma* (*Dhammanussati*)

According to Childers' Dictionary of the Pali Language, the word "***dhamma***" has several meanings such as: nature, condition or cause, quality or characteristic, object, idea, thing or phenomena, doctrine, law, virtue, justice. Here it means the **Teaching of the Buddha**.
The *Dhamma* is threefold, namely:

(a) ***Pariyatti Dhamma*** = **Text** of the Buddha's Teaching or *Tipitaka* which contains all the Buddha's word (*vacana*) or **Doctrine.**

(b) ***Patipatti Dhamma*** = **Practice** of the Buddha's Teaching by the Noble Eightfold Path or training in morality, concentration and wisdom. This is the real value of the Buddha's word.

(c) ***Pativedha Dhamma*** = **Realization** of the Buddha's Teaching through the nine Noble Attainments namely: four Paths, four Fruitions and *Nibbana*. These nine stages are the ultimate goal secured with the aid of the Teaching & Practice.

The *Dhamma* as a subject of meditation includes only the Teachings (*Pariyatti*) and Noble Attainments (*Pativedha*) whereby one recollects the six virtues of this two-fold *dhamma* to establish mindfulness. The manner of recollection is similar to the Recollection of the Buddha but here one recites the six virtues of the *Dhamma* as below:

"[1]*Svakhato Bhagavata Dhammo,* [2]*Sanditthiko,* [3]*Akaliko,* [4]*Ehipassiko,* [5]*Opanayiko,* [6]*Paccattam Veditabbo Vennuhi ti*."

"[1]Well expounded is the Dhamma of the Exalted One, [2]visible here and now, [3]immediately effective, [4]inviting one to come and see, [5]leading onwards, [6]to be realized by the wise each for himself."

These **six virtues** are now explained in detail as follows.

2.1. Well Proclaimed (*Svakato*)

This virtue refers to the mundane *Dhamma* or **Doctrine** (*Pariyatti*) and the supra-mundane **Attainments** (*Pativedha*). The remaining virtues concern only the supra-mundane Attainments.

a) <u>The Doctrine as a pure & complete mode of religious life</u>

i) Good in beginning because it teaches **morality** as the essential beginning of a pure religious life. Good in middle because it teaches **concentration** by which one acquires calm & insight. Good in the end because it points to **full knowledge and *Nibbana*** as the goal.

ii) Good in the beginning by hearing it, one acquires **confidence**. Good in the middle by practising it, one overcomes the hindrances and achieves **calm and insight**. Good in the end by **realizing happiness** as the promised result.

iii) Announces the life of purity that is utterly **perfect** and **pure** in letter and in meaning.
- **Perfect:** connected with five *Dhammakkhandas* (aggregates of *dhamma*) namely; virtue, concentration, understanding, deliverance, knowledge & vision of deliverance.
- **Pure:** exists for purpose of **crossing over** the rounds of rebirth and is not concerned with worldly things.

iv) No perversion of meaning because things described here as **obstructions and outlets (i.e. noble paths) are actually so.** Other teachings are badly proclaimed because the things they described as obstructions and outlets are actually not e.g. eternalism & annihilation views, belief in self/soul, belief in creator not *kamma*.

b) <u>Supra-mundane *Dhamma* or Nine Noble Attainments</u>

The supra-mundane *Dhamma* is well proclaimed because the course of practice is a worthy approach to *Nibbana* and *Nibbana* is a worthy result of the practice.

i) The **Noble Path,** which is the middle path between two extremes, is well proclaimed in being proclaimed to be the **middle way.**
ii) The **Fruitions,** where defilements are tranquilized, are well proclaimed in being proclaimed to have **tranquilized defilement.**
iii) ***Nibbana*** whose individual essence is eternal, deathless, refuge, safety, etc. is well proclaimed in being proclaimed to have an individual essence that is **eternal, deathless, and so on.**

So the mundane *Dhamma* ***(Pariyatti)*** and the supra-mundane *Dhamma* (*Pativedha*) are well proclaimed.

2.2. Visible Here and Now (*Sanditthiko*)

(a) It can be **seen** by a Noble person himself when he has done away with greed, wrong views, etc. "So when greed has been abandoned, he does no harm to himself, or to others, or to both." This is the *Dhamma* **visible here and now.**

(b) When one has attained it, it is visible to him here and now through **reviewing knowledge** without having to rely on faith in others.

(c) ***Sanditthi*** means proper view **(Right View)**
- **Noble path** conquers defilements by means of the **proper view** associated with it.
- **Noble fruition** is the result of this proper view.
- ***Nibbana*** is the object of this proper view.
- So the ninefold supra-mundane *Dhamma* has the **proper view-*sanditthi***

(d) Supra-mundane *Dhamma* arrests fearful rounds of rebirth as soon as it is seen by penetration of the path & realization of *Nibbana*. So it is visible here and now since it is **worthy of being seen.**

2.3. Immediately Effective (*Akaliko*)

(a) Worldly virtue takes time to yield its fruit according to the **Law of *Kamma*** in which the result does not ripen immediately but is delayed.

(b) The supra-mundane state is not subject to time. Following the passing away of the Path consciousness, there arises immediately the Fruition consciousness which tranquilizes the defilements. It is ***akaliko,*** **immediately effective**.

2.4. Inviting One to Come and See (*Ehipassiko*)

(a) The reality & purity of the Noble Attainments make them the most precious things in the world. So they are worthy of invitation **to come and see.**

(b) It is "**not come & believe"** whereby one must have faith first. In the *Kalama Sutta*, the Buddha encouraged **proper enquiry** not blind faith or speculation.

(c) By practising insight meditation according to the Noble Eightfold Path, one can directly experience the Buddha's Teaching whereby confidence and faith is developed by "**seeing**" with **right view or understanding.**

2.5. Leading Onwards (*Opanayiko*)

The Noble Attainments lead a person out of the fearful cycle of births and death (*Samsara*). They **lead onwards** to *Nibbana*, the cessation of all suffering. The way onwards consists of four stages:

(a) **First Path & Fruition:** eliminates defilements that lead to rebirth in the woeful states, namely: wrong view of personality, sceptical doubts and adherence to rites and rituals. Thereafter this Noble person will suffer not more than **seven rebirths**. He is called a *Sotapanna* or **Stream-winner.**

(b) **Second Path & Fruition:** attenuates the grosser forms of sensual desire and ill-will to the extent that this Noble person will suffer no more than **one rebirth** in the sensual realm. He is called a *Sakadagamin* or **Once-returner**.

(c) **Third Path & Fruition:** eliminates sensual desire and ill-will but not the subtle forms of craving for rebirth in Brahma realm. This Noble person will not be reborn in the sensual plane but in the Pure Abodes. He is called an *Anagamin* or **Non-returner.**

(d) **Final Path & Fruition:** eliminates all types of craving and defilements that bind one to existence. For this Noble person ***"Birth is exhausted, the holy life has been lived out, what was to be done is done, there is no more of this to come."*** He is called an ***Arahant*** or **Worthy** and has completely realized Nibbana, the cessation of all suffering.

2.6. To be Realized by the Wise, Each for Oneself (*Paccatam Veditabbo Vennuhi*)

According to the *Puggala Pannatti* (Classification of Individuals, See Reference 2), of the beings who encounter a Buddha Sasana (Religion), four classes can be distinguished.

(a) ***Ugghatitannu* (quick witted)**: a person who encounters a Buddha in person, and is capable of attaining Path & Fruition through the mere hearing of a short concise discourse.

(b) ***Vipancitannu* (medium witted)**: a person who is only capable of attaining when the short discourse is expounded to him at some length.

(c) ***Neyya* (slow witted)**: for such a person, it is necessary to study and take careful note of the discourse and then to practise the provisions therein for days, months, and years in order to attain. Period of practice is from 7 days to 30 or 60 years depending on the person's past *Parami* (Perfections).

(d) ***Padaparama* (dull witted)**: for such person, even though he encounters a Buddha *Sasana* and even though he puts in the utmost effort, he cannot attain within his lifetime. All he can do is to accumulate good habits and potential.

The first two classes can attain the 1st and higher stages of Path & Fruition through mere hearing of a discourse, like the Chief & Great Disciples, Bahiya, Visakha, Anathapindika, and others. These types of people hardly exist anymore nowadays. Only the **slow witted** and **dull witted** exist at present times.

- Noble Attainments can be experienced by **all kinds of wise persons** beginning with the quick witted. It is not in the province of fools and the dull witted.

- Each person must **experience them by himself.** For the pupil is not purified from his vices because his teacher has developed the Path. Nor can one pass on the Noble Attainments to another as one might share other types of merits.

- The Noble Attainments are not to be looked upon as something which can be obtained through the mercy of others. They should be developed, realized, and enjoyed by the wise, **each for oneself.**

2.7. Benefits of *Dhammanussati*

- Constant recollection of the Virtues of the *Dhamma*, helps to **overcome greed, hatred or delusion** in the mind.

- Being inspired by the *Dhamma*, **rectitude or uprightness** arises and the disciple overcomes the mental hindrances. But here also as in *Buddhanussati*, the meditator does not reach the absorption stage but only **access concentration** because the virtues of the *Dhamma* are so profound and the recollection of them requires intense effort and mindfulness.

- With the concentration obtained through *Dhammanussati*, one can develop **Insight** into the true nature of mental and physical phenomena that will finally lead one to the happiness of *Nibbana*.

3. Recollection of the *Sangha* (*Sanghanussati*)

The Pali word "*Sangha*" means a **congregation, order, fraternity.** According to the *Visuddhi Magga*, the members possess in common both virtue and right view. There must be a minimum of **four ordained monks** who follow the 227 monastic rules laid down by the Buddha. There are two kinds of *Sangha*, namely:

(a) ***Ariya Sangha*** (Noble Order): consists of monks who have realized one or more of the Path & Fruition stages (i.e. saints) and become **worthy of offerings**. The *Ariya Sangha* came into existence two months after Buddha's enlightenment, on the 5th waning day of *Vassa* after all the five ascetics were ordained.

(b) ***Puthujjana Sangha*** (Ordinary Order): consists of monks who are world-lings. They still **possess all ten fetters** that bind them to the rounds of rebirth but will always strive to reach the noble state.

Sanghanussati as a subject of meditation (like the *Sangha* Refuge) is confine only to the ***Ariya Sangha*** whereby one recollects the nine virtues of this Noble Order to establish mindfulness. The manner of recollection is similar to the Recollection of the Buddha but here one recites the nine virtues of the *Sangha* as follows:

"[1]*Supatipanno Bhagavato savakasangho,* [2]*ujupatipanno Bhagavato savakasangho,* [3]*nayapatipanno Bhagavato savakasangho,* [4]*samicipatpanno Bhagavato savakasangho; yadidam cattari purisa yugani attha purisa puggala, esa Bhagavato savakasangho;* [5]*ahuneyyo,* [6]*pahuneyyo,* [7]*dakkhineyyo,* [8]*anjali karaniyo,* [9]*anuttaram punnakkhettam lokassa ti.*"

"Well attained is the Order of the Blessed One's disciples, upright is the Order of the Blessed One's disciples, true is the Order of the Blessed One's disciples, proper is the Order of the Blessed One's disciples. That is, the four pairs of persons, the eight individual persons, this is the Order of the Blessed One's disciples; worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of salutations, an incomparable field of merits for the world."

3.1. Good, Well Attained (*Supatipanno*)

(a) Well attained because it is the **right practice *(samma patipada)***, that does not turn from its goal i.e., will not return to the defilements abandoned.

(b) The way has no opposition; **opposing defilements are eliminated** at each path.

(c) Conforms with the **truth** regulated by the *Dhamma*

(d) They follow the **way** according to the well-proclaimed *Dhamma* & *Vinaya* (Teaching and Discipline) and exercise **immaculate conduct** e.g. Ven. Sariputta and the one meal at public house.

3.2. Upright or Straight Practice (*Ujupatipanno*)

(a) Avoiding two extremes, they have entered the middle path that is **upright** and lead **straight** to *Nibbana.*

(b) They have entered the way that **abandons** bodily, verbal & mental crookedness. Therefore **straight** and no deceit or hypocrisy, not even a single hint for the sake of livelihood.

3.3. True or Correct Practice (*Nayapatipanno*)

(a) Practising correctly the Noble Eightfold Path that leads to *Nibbana. Nibbana* is what is called "true".

(b) So true to the practice that they will give up their lives rather than break the precepts e.g. monk who died rather than destroy a plant.

3.4. Dutiful or Proper Practice (*Samicipatipanno*)

(a) Conduct is **dutiful and proper** with respect to the Teaching & Discipline.
(b) They make use of the four requisites offered by the laity like a **master or son** using his inheritance and not like a thief or a person owing a debt. It is called proper practice because it is the way of those worthy of proper acts of veneration.

<u>Puthujjana or worldling monks worthy of respect</u>
An ordinary monk who is vigorously striving is also **worthy of respect** because he possesses the five factors of a striver *(Padhaniya),* namely:
i) **Faith** in the enlightenment of the Buddha.
ii) Good **health and digestion.**
iii) Free from **deceit and hypocrisy.**
iv) Sustains **fourfold effort** to root out defilements.
v) Attained the insight into the quick arising and passing away of mental and material phenomena or the **fourth insight knowledge, *udayabbaya nana.***

Yadidam: That is to say or namely
cattari purisa yugani: the four pairs of persons
attha purisa puggala**:** the eight individual persons

- 1^{st} Path and 1^{st} Fruition form one pair. So the 4 Paths and 4 Fruitions form four pairs of persons.
- Taken individually, they represent 8 persons (defined in terms of mental processes).

3.5. Worthy of Gifts (*Ahuneyyo*)

- Derived from the word *"**ahuna**"* or sacrifice, it is something **donated to the virtuous.**
- Term for the **four requisites.**
- *Sangha* is **worthy to receive** that gift because it bears great fruit.

3.6. Worthy of Hospitality (*Pahuneyyo*)

Gifts and services rendered with honour and respect to visiting friends, dear and beloved relatives from afar is **hospitality.**

- *Sangha* is encountered only during a Buddha era and is like a **rare visitor** with endearing and lovable qualities. Hence it is worthy of hospitality.
- As the *Sangha* is worthy to be placed first as the **guest of honour**, it is worthy of hospitality.

3.7. Worthy of Offerings (*Dakkhineyyo*)

A gift is said to be '*dakkhina*' (offering) when it is given out of **faith in the next world.**

(a) The *Sangha* purifies it by making it of great fruit that it may even be transferred to departed relatives who are capable of receiving the merit (transference of merit).

(b) In the Analysis of Offerings (*Majjhima* iii, 256), the Buddha enumerated 14 grades of offering according to the purity of the recipient, with the highest offering to the Buddha and the lowest to an animal. The reason is that when giving to an individual, purity of the individual is important. There are four purifications of offerings:
   i) Purified by **donor** but not by recipient
   ii) Purified by **recipient** but not by donor
   iii) Purified by both **donor and recipient**
   iv) **Not purified** by either donor or recipient.

(c) Offering to the *Sangha* is **more beneficial** than offering to an individual. Here, whoever represents the *Sangha* are mere representatives, who help to recall to memory the *Ariya Sangha* including the Chief and Great Arahants during the Buddha's time. Because of such purity of the *Sangha,* the offering bears great fruit. Therefore, the ***Sangha* is worthy of offerings.**

3.8. Worthy of Salutations (*Anjalikaraniyo*)

- People salute one another according to their culture or custom, as a greeting or out of politeness.

- The Buddhist performs reverential salutation to the *Sangha* by placing both hands (palms joined) on the head out of **respect for their virtue and purity.**

- Anyone can take on an appearance of respectability but will find it difficult to live up to the high standards of morality, tranquility, and insight wisdom over the long term.

- The *Sangha* is **worthy of reverential salutation** because they really live up to the practice of the *Dhamma & Vinaya* of the Buddha.

3.9. An Incomparable Field of Merits in the World (*Anuttaram Punnakkhetam Lokassa*)

Cultivation of merits is like farming. It requires several causes/conditions for success, namely:

a) Root (*hetu*) - seeds & cultivator
b) Supporting (*paccaya*) - fertility of the field
c) Constituents (*sambhara*) - water, sunlight, wind, drainage, rivers & creeks to feed the fields, etc.

- A clever cultivator will always use **good & viable seeds** to sow. He will choose fertile, suitable land to till and plant his crop at the right time and protect them against pests, weeds, and damage. These inputs alone won't ensure a good harvest without constituents such as water, sunlight, wind.

- The clever cultivator is like the **virtuous donor** who accomplishes his task with the four bases of success, namely: **desire, effort, mind, knowledge**. He knows which elements strengthen or weaken the beneficial results of offering: offering with or without faith, care & respect, timely, without attachment to offering, without belittling others.

- Good viable seeds are like **good mental volitions** before, during and after the act of offering. They are rooted in non-greed, non-hate, non-delusion.

- The time, water, sunlight and control measures are **constituents** such as the types of offerings or requisites, right time, etc.

- The fertile field is like the **virtue of the recipient** who has overcome greed, hatred and delusion. Given a choice of recipients, a wise person will choose the *Sangha* to receive offering because the "*Sangha* is the **best field of merit** in the world."

3.10. Benefits of *Sanghanussati*

- When one thus recollects the Virtues of the *Sangha*, one's mind is not invaded by **greed, hatred or delusion** but is upright and joyful, free from all hindrances.

- But here also as in *Buddhanussati*, the meditator does not reach the absorption stage but only **access concentration** because the Virtues of the *Sangha* are so profound and the recollection of them requires **intense effort and mindfulness**.

- One who constantly recollects the Virtues of the *Sangha* comes to have **respect and faith** in it, and is not overcome by fear or dread. One is able to bear pain, can form the idea that one is in

the company the *Sangha* and the mind aims at **attaining the virtues** of the *Sangha.*

- With the concentration obtained through *Sanghanussati*, one can develop **Insight** into the true nature of mental and physical phenomena that will finally lead one to the happiness of *Nibbana*. If one fails to reach *Arahantship* in the present life, certainly one is assured of a happy destiny.

4. References

1) The Path of Purification (*Visuddhimagga*) by the Venerable Bhikkhu Nanamoli.
2) The Requisites of Enlightenment by the Venerable Ledi Sayadaw.
3) Buddhist Meditation in Theory and Practice by Ven. Paravahera Vajiranana Mahathera. Published by Buddhist Missionary Society, Jalan Berhala, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1975.